



THE METEOR



**Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara
Harris-Lass House Museum
Summer Edition - July 1, 2017**

**Join Local Artists for “Art on the Lawn”
Free Event August 19 at Harris-Lass Museum**

by Mary Hanel

On Saturday, August 19th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. the lovely gardens of the Harris-Lass Museum, 1889 Market Street, in Santa Clara will be the setting for 10 local artists to exhibit and sell their creative works of art.

“These talented individuals represent a variety of techniques, including watercolor, lapidary, photography, and wine cork bird houses,” announced Joan Cabral, event coordinator. “This is a free event and visitors will also have an opportunity to tour the 13-room farmhouse, before or after purchasing original art work and one-of-a-kind paintings, rock jewelry, framed photography prints, and gifts made from wine bottle corks.”

Some of the artist are affiliated with and can provide information on local art organizations, such as the Santa Clara Valley Water Color Society, the Santa Clara Art Association, Santa Clara University Art Department, and the Santa Clara Senior Center’s arts and crafts programs.



Joan Cabral photos

**Antiques Dealers Return for Annual Appraisal Luncheon
Thursday, July 13 at the Harris-Lass House Museum**

Family keepsakes, heirlooms, and one-of-a-kind treasures will be featured at the 14th annual Antiques Appraisal and luncheon on Thursday, July 13 in the gardens of the Harris-Lass House Museum at 1889 Market Street in Santa Clara.

Guests lucky enough to secure the 55 tickets will pick up their box lunches and cold drinks at 11:30 a.m. in the barn classroom, with appraisals to begin at 12 noon. The popular team of antique experts will once again feature Steve Yvaska, Sunday columnist for the San Jose Mercury News, along with Craig Trimble and Vickie Cirner, antique dealers at The Antiques Colony store, 1881 West San Carlos Street, in San Jose.

“This will be the 14th year for our show-and-tell event, which always has some spectacular surprises,” announced Donna Marencia, event coordinator. If there should be a ticket cancellation, interested persons can contact Donna at (408) 241– 1572 for ticket availability. The program is sponsored by the Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara.

Harris-Lass Museum's Captain Lass "Missing Portrait" Found in Santa Clara City Hall Storage Basement

The two-year statewide search for a missing oil painting of retired sea captain Christian Lass, former owner of the Victorian farm house known today as the Harris-Lass Museum, came to an end in April in a storage room basement below the offices of the Santa Clara City Hall.

"We are thrilled to have the painting once again hanging in the Lass family home, but shocked that for almost 30 years it was unclaimed in a basement only one mile from the city-owned museum at 1889 Market Street," said Bob Byrd, president of the Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara.

"Although the painting itself was in good condition, the huge gilded frame was in need of restoration and cleaning," said Byrd. "David Dittmann, owner of David's Brushes and Chisels, was successful in repairing the frame and visitors can now view the portrait in the museum's double parlor."

"The HPSSC board of directors is much appreciative of board member Joan Cabral's efforts to track down the long-lost painting. She was the lead detective in contacting local historians, art museums, and 'lost art' web sites in trying to solve the puzzle of what happened to the picture after the City took possession of the Lass house and contents in 1987," explained Byrd.

He noted all home furnishings had been appraised for insurance purposes and given an inventory number prior to selling the house. Art collector Austen Warburton, a local attorney who represented the family at the time the real estate sale was closed, suggested the painting should be restored by an art expert in San Francisco.

Still attached to the portrait is the original tag stating "Property of the City of Santa Clara" and Lass Museum inventory number 15121. AND proof Mr. Warburton did indeed have the painting cleaned. Stapled to the frame is the restorer's receipt with the date 1988, Alexander P. Stopowski, 7th Street, San Francisco, and the painting identified as CAPT. LASS PICTURE and the misleading information TRITON MUSEUM.

Following Mr. Warburton's death in 1995, his family gave a second donation of his personal art collection to the city-owned Triton Museum of Art. Included was the Lass picture, which was actually never donated to the Triton, but was later apparently placed in an off-site storage room at City Hall with other "non-collection" items.

A Triton staff member discovered the missing painting in April when visiting a basement storage room which does not house donated art. "While there are still a few gaps in the puzzle of the missing painting," said Ms. Cabral, "both the Triton and Harris-Lass museums are happy the 30-year mystery has been solved. What is wonderful is that so many people came together to find this priceless piece of Santa Clara history."

Captain Christian Lass, a native of Germany and 25-year resident of San Francisco, lived in his 13-room Market Street farm house from 1906 until his death in 1920. And perhaps the "lost painting" has shed new light on author Thomas Wolfe's 1940 Pulitzer Prize winning book "You Can't Go Home Again". After all these years, the sea captain is back home again with his portrait next to the one of his beloved wife Julia."



Photos by Sue Kozdon

Reminder: HPSSC memberships for July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018 are now due. Refer to membership form enclosed with the July edition of the Meteor newsletter.

Assemblyman Kansen Chu Honors Eight Local “Community Heroes” for Volunteer Service

Eight Santa Clara individuals who work, live, or serve in California’s 25th Assembly District were recently named Community Heroes by Assembly member Kansen Chu of Milpitas. “Because of their dedication and strong commitment to public service, this year’s honorees have greatly improved the quality of life in my 25th District,” said Mr. Chu, who represents Milpitas, Fremont, Newark, San Jose, and Santa Clara.



Lou Faria, Bob Byrd, and former Mayor Patricia Mahan
- Photo by Joan Cabral

In announcing the 66 recipients at an awards dinner hosted May 25 by Samsung Semiconductor Inc. in San Jose, Mr. Chu said, “I am honored to recognize a wonderful group of citizens who are truly our Community Heroes.”

Bob Byrd and Noreen Carlson were nominated by Lou Faria, Santa Clara preservation activist. The event was a part of National Volunteer Week April 23-29. Congratulations to the local honorees!

* **Bob Byrd** – President of the Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara, a 17-year volunteer at the Harris-Lass Museum, and 10-year member of the City Library Board of Trustees.

* **Noreen Carlson** – Community activist and resident of the historic Old Quad neighborhood; has worked many hours with city officials on preservation issues.

* **Dominic Caserta** – Dedicated City Council member and current Vice Mayor; has mentored students 20+ years as a history teacher at Santa Clara High School.

* **Patricia Eldridge** – A 20-year volunteer serving homeless families within the Santa Clara Unified School District and “going the extra mile” to help students with basic needs.

* **Charles Frost** – Executive Director of the Santa Clara Vanguard drill team and mentor for increasing opportunities in local performing arts organizations.

* **Cheryl Lee** – Librarian at the Santa Clara City Northside Branch Library. Has created many Rivermark community programs to encourage lifelong reading skills. ◆

* **Marlys Lee** – Worked tirelessly to establish the Santa Clara Veterans Memorial in Central Park. Helped, to raise funds and develop site design; treasurer for 16 years.

* **Alice Pivacek** – Heart of the Valley volunteer, Senior Center AARP tax program coordinator, and Senior Advisory Commissioner for 10 years.

Historic Preservation Society’s Annual Yard Sale Will Offer Bargain Prices on Saturday, September 9

The annual summer yard sale sponsored by the Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara is scheduled for Saturday, September 9, from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on the grounds of the Harris-Lass Museum, 1889 Market Street in Santa Clara.

“HPSSC members who have paid their 2017-2018 membership dues may reserve tables and chairs at no charge to sell their own individual items,” announced Sue Harper and Jackie Brazil, event organizers. To do so, members must call the museum message line at 408-249-7905 or email info@harrisslass.org with their request. Space is limited.

Sale items will include marked down clearance bargains from the Tank House Gift Shop, as well as donated household items dropped off at the museum to raise funds for educational school tour supplies and to maintain the Heritage Orchard fruit trees and rose gardens.

HPSSC members will also be selling their own collectibles, handmade arts and crafts, and unwanted treasures from their garages, attics, and storage sheds. Bargain hunters are encouraged to come and browse for quality flea market items and low prices.

Board of Directors

Bob Byrd - President
 Donna Jeler -Vice-President
 Sue Harper - Secretary
 Susan Kozdon - Treasurer
 Joan Cabral, Alma Guillot,
 Mary Hanel, Maria Lopes,
 Jeannie Mahan, Mary Ann
 Marinshaw, Barbara Mordy,
 and Teresa Nemeth.

The Meteor newsletter is published April 1, July 1, October 1 by the HPSSC.

Staff members

Bob Byrd; Franklin
 Gonsalves, Layout Editor;
 Joan Cabral; Mary Hanel;
 Sue Harper; Susan Kozdon.



The Harris-Lass Museum is located at 1889 Market Street in Santa Clara.

The mailing address is:
 HPSSC, P.O. Box 3311,
 Santa Clara, CA 95055.

For other information visit us at our web site at www.harrisslass.org or call 1 (408) 249-7905

Weekend Museum House tours are open to the public from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on

- Sunday, July 9
 - Saturday, July 22
 - Sunday, August 6
 - and Saturday, August 19
- during the Art Show

Captain Lass Legacy Preserved in Historic Coastline Navigation Map

by Joan Cabral

In the theme of “Restore, Preserve, Protect, and Share,” the HPSSC Board of Directors has had the 1855 Washington-Oregon coastal maritime map used by Captain Lass restored and digitally preserved.

Board members Sue Kozdon and Mary Ann Marinshaw spearheaded the project and contacted art restorer Kathleen Orlenko of Santa Clara, who specializes in paper restoration.

“Kathleen did an amazing job restoring the 158-year-old map”, said Joan Cabral, board member and project facilitator. “Once finished, we wondered if the Maritime National Historical Museum in San Francisco might be interested in a copy of the map, which measures 24 x 26 inches.”

Cabral contacted Heather Hernandez, the museum archivist, and she was thrilled to add the Captain Lass map to their maritime collection. Mary Hanel, also a board member, gathered historical information on the Lass family and Harris-Lass Museum to be included with the map at the San Francisco museum.

“A big thank you goes to Santa Clara art restorer David Dittmann, owner of David’s Brushes and Chisels, for recommending the scanning and copying process completed at Picture Element in Santa Clara,” said Cabral. And where is the map kept in the Harris-Lass Museum? When visiting the captain’s upstairs bedroom, check out the table at the foot of his bed. You will find the map, along with items from his many years as a cargo ship captain.

Movie Night at Harris-Lass Museum September 15

By Mary Hanel

On Friday night, September 15, 2017, in the barn at the Harris Lass Museum, the Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara is sponsoring its annual 'Movie Night.' This year, ***The Longest Winter: The Donner Party Story***, a 26-minute documentary produced in 1982 by the Sierra State Parks Foundation, will be shown. Based on diaries and letters, visitors will be taken back to the 1840s and experience life on the Emigrant Trail to California. Viewers will be given insight into the poor decisions made by leaders of the Donner Party that led some of its members to be stranded near Donner Lake during the blizzards of 1846-47. Besides being a compelling and tragic tale, the Donner Party Story has relevance to Santa Clara County history as some of the surviving members of the Donner, Reed and McCutchen families settled in San Jose. Some family members are buried in San Jose's Oak Hill Memorial Park.



Leo Martinez and Mary Hanel have announced film showings will begin at 6:30, 7:00, 7:30 and 8:00 p.m. Popcorn and cider will be served. Admission is free. RSVPs requested. Call Mary at 1-408-253-0682 to reserve a time preference. Film suitable for ages 13 and up.